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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

THROUGH:

[redacted]
Chief, Legislation Division
Office of Legislative Liaison

FROM:

[redacted]
Legislation Division
Office of Legislative LiaisonSUBJECT: Briefing of House and Senate Committees
on NSDD-138

1. On 24 April 1984, the undersigned attended two Congressional briefings on the Administration's anti-terrorism initiatives. The first briefing was given in the morning before selected Congressmen and Staff from the House Foreign Affairs and House Armed Services Committees.^{1/} House Foreign Affairs was represented by its Chairmen, Dante Fascell, and Ranking Minority Member, William Broomfield, while House Armed Services was represented by its Chairman, Melvin Price, and Ranking Minority Member, William Dickinson. Representing the Administration was Oliver North, NSC; Bob Sayer, State Department; General Rice, Joint Special Operations Command, DOD; John Otto, FBI; and [redacted] CIA. [redacted]

2. The briefing began with a brief overview by Mr. North outlining the threat posed by international terrorism. Mr. North provided both individual examples of international terrorism directed against Americans overseas and statistical evidence concerning the nature of international terrorism. He then mentioned the following three Administration initiatives taken in response to the threat: (1) a legislative package, which was sent to the Hill on the day of the briefing, that would make it easier to prosecute international terrorists, or those who support international terrorism; (2) an attempt to

^{1/} The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence were also invited to the briefing, but neither attended.

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25X1 obtain the cooperation of allied nations in the fight against
terrorism, and (3) a National Security Decision Directive on
new measures to fight terrorism. Mr. North pointed out early
in his discussion on NSDD-138 that there was nothing in the
NSDD that authorizes "hit squads" or assassinations, and that
the NSDD requires that any action taken against terrorists must
be in full conformance with all U.S. laws, regulations and
applicable executive orders. [redacted]

25X1 3. Mr. North was followed by [redacted] of the Directorate
of Intelligence, who provided a more in-depth analysis of the
25X1 threat posed by international terrorism. [redacted] main points
were that terrorist activities are becoming more lethal and
that the phenomenon of state supported terrorism was growing,
25X1 particularly in the Mid-East. [redacted] proceeded to give
several examples of terrorist activities that were instigated
25X1 [redacted]

4. After discussing the threat posed by international
terrorism, the various federal agencies assigned to combat
terrorism explained their assigned roles under NSDD-138.
Ambassador Sayer began this portion of the presentation by
pointing out new initiatives that the State Department was
undertaking to protect the security of American embassies.
Furthermore, Mr. Sayer pointed out that the Administration
intended to work closely with American allies in Europe to come
up with a united stand against international terrorism.
General Rice followed Ambassador Sayer's presentation with an
explanation of the steps DOD would take to implement NSDD-138.
These steps would include additional efforts to protect
25X1 American servicemen overseas from terrorist attacks and
development of new options to combat terrorism. [redacted]
25X1 [redacted]

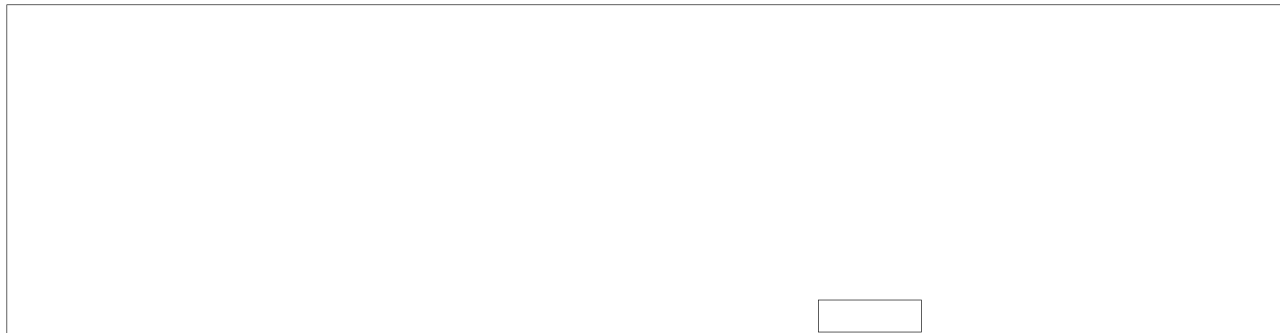
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7. At the conclusion of the briefing, Congressman Dickenson inquired as to who had primary responsibility in the U.S. for combating terrorism and was told that the FBI would be in charge. Congressman Fascell then asked General Rice what the primary offensive mission of the DOD was in combating terrorism overseas. General Rice had some difficulty in answering this question, but eventually said that DOD's primary offensive mission was in executing orders issued by the National Command Authority if intelligence indicates that a terrorist attack is likely. 

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8. On the afternoon of 28 April, the Administration briefed the following Senators on NSDD-138: Charles Percy, Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Claiborne Pell, Ranking Minority Member of Senate Foreign Relations; Strom Thurmond, Armed Services Committee; and Jeremiah Denton, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Senate Judiciary Committee. The presentation was essentially the same as that given the House. At the end of the presentation, Senator Percy inquired as to whether it would be prudent for Senators campaigning for re-election to be given Secret Service protection against possible terrorist attacks. The FBI responded that they had no hard evidence that terrorists were planning to assassinate any Senators up for re-election and that they did not see any need for Secret Service protection at this point. 

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